



Opening Extractives

Unlocking the benefits of ownership data

Using beneficial ownership data in Ghana

Capacity building sessions for CSOs and journalists

Background

To improve the governance of natural resources, Ghana signed onto the Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in 2003 and was admitted as an implementing country in 2007. Since joining the EITI, Ghana has disclosed 10 EITI Reports covering fiscal years between 2004-2018. Ghana EITI reports have included other significant information related to transparency in the extractive industry, such as revenues, contracts, production and crude oil sales.

In 2020, countries participating in the EITI were required to disclose beneficial owners of mining, oil and gas companies. The government enacted the 2019 Companies (Amended) Act, which mandates the Registrar General's Department (RGD) to collect and maintain a comprehensive beneficial ownership (BO) register for all sectors, including the extractive industry. Ghana EITI reports have also included ownership information, albeit with limited details and coverage.

Despite the political commitment and progress to institutionalise disclosure of beneficial owners, existing information is not yet fully publicly available, nor has it been analysed by data users interested in the field. Opportunities therefore remain to maximise the impact of beneficial ownership by improving not only the quality of BO data disclosed but also the accessibility and usability of the information.

The Opening Extractives Programme

The [Opening Extractives \(OE\) Programme](#) is a global initiative aiming to transform the availability and use of beneficial ownership data for effective governance in the extractive sector. The programme combines political and technical engagement, to support countries implementing beneficial ownership reforms and to enable the use of the data by governments, civil society and companies.

In September 2021, the [Government of Ghana committed](#) to implementing and accelerating beneficial ownership disclosure and data use by joining the OE Programme. The Government's commitment to improve corporate ownership disclosure is aimed at promoting a transparency and conducive business environment and addressing corruption (particularly tax evasion, avoidance and illicit financial flows) in a bid to increase domestic revenue mobilization.

Capacity building sessions

The OE Programme, in collaboration with the Registrar General's Department and the Ghana Opening Extractives National Steering Committee, is organising a series of capacity building and training sessions for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and journalists to raise awareness on the existence and importance of quality and timely BO data, and share skills, tools and methodologies to analyse and use these data. The rationale is to strengthen capacities amongst journalists, civil society organizations and active citizens to analyse and utilise beneficial ownership data to improve natural resources advocacy and governance in Ghana.

Objectives

- Raise awareness around local stakeholders on the importance of accessible and timely BO data, and build local capacity in advocacy and data analysis;
- Train journalists, CSOs and active citizens on BO concepts, definitions and thresholds, the current data available and how it could be used for investigation;
- Build a network of interested stakeholders who use BO data for their work and research; and
- Provide practical user-focused feedback to the Registrar General's Department on the options for strengthening high-quality data collection and improving useability of BO data disclosure.

Expected outcomes

- CSOs and journalists gain the ability to differentiate legal owners from beneficial owners, understand the basis for existing complexities in different types of company ownership structures and associated risks; and familiarise themselves with Ghana's legal framework for BO transparency;
- CSOs and journalists gain skills to identify and analyse BO data, with other publicly available information to inform their investigations, advocacy analyses and journalistic reportage.
- An Opening Extractives Ghana Media Group is created to interact, collaborate, and use BO information in their day-to-day work (including data journalism and investigative journalism) to ultimately improve natural resource governance in Ghana.

Outline

The capacity building workshop will be organised in three sessions, each of two days. Sessions will be led by the Opening Extractives team, in partnership with the Registrar General's Department and with expert support from experienced media trainers, investigative journalists and research/advocacy analysts. At the end of the training, few selected participants will be technically and financially supported to undertake a pilot BO use-case project, i.e., using existing BO information, together with other publicly accessible information to undertake a research/analytical/advocacy report or investigative/systematic reportage.

- **First Session: Demystifying beneficial ownership.**

This session is intended to provide a general understanding of BO disclosure, the underlying reasons for the global wave of increased BO disclosure, updates on implementation within Ghana, and the overall benefits of BO implementation to Ghana's economy and society.

This session will be conducted in person during February 3rd and 4th, 2022 (two days).

- **Second session: Accessing and using beneficial ownership information**

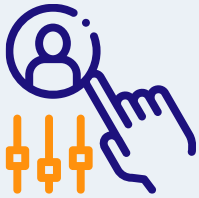
This session is intended to provide participants with targeted skills on how to apply BO information in their respective fields and sectors. RGD will showcase the accessibility of BO information by citizens and civil society, and an experienced investigative journalist will share skills, methodologies, data sources and tools to use BO and other types of data for improved natural resource governance in Ghana. The session will finalise with a task for participants, to be completed and shared with others during the next session.

This session will be conducted in person during 16th and 18th February 2022 (three days)

- **Third Session: Towards successful research proposals.**

Participants will share their tasks and findings (based on the last part of Session 2), and will answer short quizzes and exercises to make sure the concepts covered previously are clear. The session will also open up a grant scheme and an internal call for applications for small grants to support personal or organisational work that utilises BO information (and others) to affect public policy changes or effect positive changes in the economy or society. The OE team will introduce the specific timeline, criteria and details to apply.

This last session will be conducted 17th and 18th March, 2022 (in person or virtual, TBD).



Selection criteria

- A background knowledge in public policy or relevant field/governance issue.
- Demonstrate Experience in working/reporting on Ghana's legal/policy framework governing the business sector. Prior knowledge working on beneficial ownership, corporate structures, illicit financial flows or related in the context of Ghana's mineral, oil and gas sector is an advantage
- Availability (and organisational support if applicable) to take part of the three sessions and undertake the research if eligible through funding proposals.
- Strong interpersonal skills: an openness and eagerness to collaborate with other groups and actors (not just local CSO groups, but within donors, government, companies and individual consultants) , and experience and/or interest in strengthening capacities amongst media, CSO practitioners or policy makers.
- Advanced written and communication skills in English.



How to apply?

Any person working in a CSO or media centre, independent journalists, or active citizens interested in the topic of company ownership/control, natural resources governance, illicit financial flows or related governance and business reporting/research can apply to take part in the capacity-building sessions.

People applying from more than 50km away from Accra can apply to have their travel costs and hotel accommodation to attend the sessions reimbursed

To apply, please complete this [online form](#) **no later than January 16, 2022**.

Note that the application will require:

- Your background information, previous knowledge on the topic and motivation to participate work.
- Attach a CV with selected work on the topic.

Important dates

- December 20th, 2021: Open call for applications
- **January 16th, 2022: Deadline to submit applications**
- January 24th, 2022: Confirmation to selected applicants
- February 3 & 4, 2022: First session
- February 16, 17 & 18: Second session
- March 17 & 18, 2022: Third session and open call for research proposals

Jointly implemented by the EITI and Open Ownership